

# Abbey Patient Participation Group annual meeting, April 11, 2019, 1pm

**Present:** Sue McNab, Debs Smith, Gerry Coppel, Chris Barnatt, Christine Tyldesley, Jean Yarnell, Jean Reid, Beating Drum

**Apologies:** Thelma Hembury, Lucy Turner, Joy Stevenson. No GP was available due to staff shortage.

**Minutes of last meeting:** Agreed.

A new member, Beating Drum, who is a patient who has joined us from the now closed West End surgery, was introduced to the members.

**Carers:** Yvonne Gregory, from the Carers' Federation, gave a talk about her work. Abbey has 115 out of its 5,548 patients identified as unpaid carers for partners, friends or neighbours. In view of the fact that one in nine people nationally are unpaid carers, the practice could have identified 500 carers. Yvonne asked what the practice could do to promote awareness? Since the Care Act of 2014, there has been more support from the Government for unpaid carers, who save the exchequer an estimated £132bn a year. The Nottm West Clinical Commissioning Group has been paying the Carers' Federation to carry out work in the community to identify more unpaid carers and offer help and Yvonne has been running a monthly drop-in session at the Abbey Medical Centre.

Practice manager Debs Smith said the practice was committed to this and has appointed one of the new receptionists, Debbie, to be the Carers' Champion in place of Rebecca, who has taken on more admin duties. The surgery has carers' packs and young carers' packs to give out when it identifies people who look after others.

Sue suggested perhaps the patient group could liaise with Yvonne to hold a coffee morning or afternoon session. Gerry felt it important to avoid the word carer in any publicity because people in that position often do not think of themselves as carers. Jean Yarnell wondered if carers could be offered health checks themselves and Debs said this was a thing the surgery encouraged. There is automatic software calling in patients over 50 if they have not been seen for a while or are seen to need a health check.

**Action:** Sue will liaise with Debs and Yvonne about a date for an event and posters etc.

**Recruitment update (clinical staff):** Two new doctors are to take over Dr Browne's sessions and there is a new full-time nurse practitioner, along with the one already working three days a week, and the surgery is also advertising for a health care assistant.

**New appointment system:** Debs said the practice is trying to manage the number of sit and wait patients doctors are having to see after normal

morning surgery. There had been up to 20 a day on some mornings. The new system aims to release appointments 2,3,4 and five days ahead to create more availability. Appointments are released both morning and afternoon. The system is being monitored to see if it is working as hoped for.

Chair Chris Barnatt described the new system as confusing, because how it is presented on a noticeboard in the surgery is not how it is presented on the website. He also pointed out that people with chronic illnesses would want to see a doctor and not a nurse practitioner and gave an example of how even before the new system came in he had had to force his way through the system to insist on seeing a doctor and not a nurse practitioner. Debs said she was sorry to hear this as patients with ongoing chronic condition should be seen by a GP and reception staff are aware of this. He said same day appointments with a doctor were important for people with ongoing conditions. He felt previously he had not had to fight for NHS services but feels the balance has shifted in our practice. Gerry Coppel agreed. Debs said there were still some on- the- day emergency appointments available with the GPs, if indeed the appointment was considered an emergency by the patient, and if you see a nurse practitioner who feels you must see a doctor you will see one. Also nurse practitioners have clear guidelines as to who they see and who they don't. For example, they don't see under-ones or people with chronic conditions. Other comments were made about being unable to book ahead to get blood test results and about having to ring in early on several days to get an appointment because only certain appointments are released on certain days. Again Debs was sorry to hear this as, since the start of the new system, patients are now being offered telephone appointments for blood results that are non-urgent to discuss with a GP. If the GP needed to speak to the patient urgently about their blood test result, they would contact the patient straight away.

Debs said the patients' comments were welcomed and the GPs will be monitoring the new system and findings will be brought to the next meeting.

**PRG report:** Sue said there had been an information session about Diabetes which was full of information. The surgery will put up a display for Diabetes Day. The future of the PRG is still uncertain.

**Election of officers:** Chair Chris Barnatt, vice-chair Gerry Coppel and secretary Sue McNab were all re-elected.

**Date of next meetings:** Wednesday, June 26, 6.30pm, and Thursday, August 8, 1pm. **(Please note the June date has been changed from June 19 to 26 because the surgery has been given a date for a late surgery session to 8.30pm on June 19. We hope this does not inconvenience members.)**